

A
LETTER

TO A

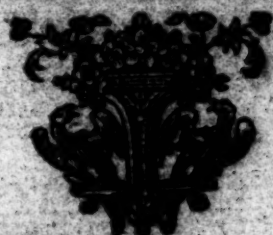
LADY,

ON

CARD-Playing

ON THE

LORDS' DAY.

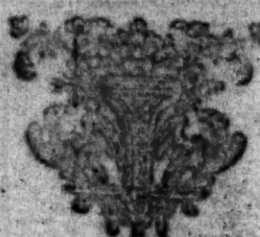


LONDON:

Printed for J. LEAKE, at Bath;
And Sold by M. COOPER, in *Pater-noster Row*,
and R. DODSLEY, in *Pall-mall*.

MDCCXLVIII.

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TO A

L A D Y.

To

YOU cannot think how much I was surpris'd, when I heard that L—, notwithstanding the Seriousness she professes, and all my high Commendations of it, would no more scruple

B

to

to be of a *Sunday-Party at Cards*, than either the D— of —, or Lady —, or any other of her gayest Acquaintance. I had hitherto consider'd you as most unlikely to be persuaded to go *such a Length in diverting yourself*, and therefore never said any thing to you about *it*; but since L— has taught me, how serviceable it may be to the best-principled of the Sex to mistrust them — to think them not secure from being hurt by any Insinuations, against which they are not fortify'd by Argument, as well as Education; I can no longer be silent: You must now give me Leave to shew you, how much may be said for the present Sentiments of us both, *on this Point*; and how well we may justify our steadiest Adherence to them. This is all the Preface my Subject wants, and all, I am sure, that

that you will desire, when I can have no End in my Application to you, but to serve you.

THE Commandment given by *Moses* to keep holy One Day in Seven, so far as the Reason of it subsists under Christianity, cannot but be thought to oblige every Christian. *I came, not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it*, Mat. v. not to make void the Law, but to perfect it, is the express Declaration of Christ. He came, not to destroy either the moral or ceremonial Law, but to enforce the one, and to fulfil what was represented by the other.

WHATEVER in the Fourth Commandment has only a Relation to the particular Circumstances of the *Jewish* Nation, may cease to oblige, when the *Jews* are no longer in

those Circumstances ; when they are to be no more a separate People ; when all Mankind are to have one and the same Rule of Duty : But *the Commandment*, so far as it is *holy, just, and good in itself*, Rom. vii. 12. is yet in Force, is as much a Rule to a Disciple of Christ, as it was to a Descendant of *Abraham*.

To keep holy the *Seventh* Day of the Week, or, what we call *Saturday*; to do *on this Day*, neither ourselves nor Servants, any manner of Work, cannot concern us ; as the *Jews* were directed to this, only to preserve among them the Remembrance of an Event, in which they alone were interested. This we are warranted to assert by *Moses* himself, who, when he mentions the *Seventh* Day as the Sabbath, gives this Reason for its being so, *Thou wert*

were a Servant in the Land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty Hand, and by a stretched out Arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-day, Deut. v. 15. But that we should keep holy, or separate, one Day out of Seven, in Acknowledgement of the universal Creator (for which Purpose the Sabbath was originally appointed); that we should rest from all bodily Labour upon it, in order to have the more Leisure to confirm ourselves in becoming Sentiments of him, to habituate our Minds to them, and thereby increase their Influence upon our Practice: This has an equal Expediency for them, who lived before the Law given by *Moses* — for them to whom it was given — and for us, who are under the Dispensation which supercedes it.

AND

AND if we will consult the Books of the New Testament, we shall not, perhaps, find a Syllable in them that allows us any Liberty on our Sabbath, or Day of Rest, that could not be taken by the *Jews* on theirs, except such as they were debarr'd from by Considerations particularly respecting their Nation or Condition. The Rest enjoin'd them by their Lawgiver, they, indeed, misinterpreted; they made it a Burden to them, that he never intended it should be; and all we find said by our Saviour concerning the Sabbath, may, I think, be explain'd as regarding this Mistake, and intending to correct it,

THUS, when his Disciples, in passing through the Corn-fields on the Sabbath-day, pluck'd the Ears of
Corn

Corn to satisfy their Hunger, *Matt.* xii. 1. and were for this reprov'd by the Pharisees, as doing what was not lawful to be done on the Sabbath-day ; the Defence he makes for them, is, that the Reproof of them had not a just Foundation, they had done nothing that deserv'd Blame ; nothing but what the Law allow'd ; Works of Necessity and Charity were not forbidden by it. The Shew-bread was only to be eaten by the Priests, *Matt.* xii. 3, 4. and yet, when *David* was press'd with Hunger, the Priests consider'd the Relief of him with that Bread, as no Offence against the Law ; the Case of Hunger they regarded as an excepted Case ; and the same Reason that held for adjudging it such with respect to the Shew-bread, held likewise for determining it such with respect to the Sabbath.

THE Priests, on the Sabbath, without any Breach of their Duty upon it, do all the Work in the Temple, that its Service requires, *Matt. xii. 5.*

SACRIFICE was as much the Command of God, as Rest upon the Sabbath; and yet Acts that were for Man's Welfare he preferr'd to it; he would rather have Mercy shewn, than Sacrifice offer'd, if they stood in Competition. *Matt. xii. 7.*

THUS, also, when the Cures which Christ wrought on the Sabbath-day were censur'd as so many Failures in the due Observation of it; the Whole of his Defence both of himself, and of them who applied to him, on that Day, for a Cure, proceeded upon his acting consistently with the Rest enjoin'd by the Law of *Moses*, and consistently with what they themselves, with

with all their Scruples, had determined about it, *Matt. xii. 9—14.*

THE Language of *St. Paul* to the *Colossians*, chap. ii. 26, 27, is, *Let no Man judge you in Meat or Drink, or in respect of an holy Day, or of the new Moon, or of the Sabbath; which are a Shadow of things to come, but the Body is of Christ.* They only shadow out, or obscurely represent, what you are now in Possession of. Whatever in the Law of *Moses*, related to the Sabbath, as shadowing out the Advantages to be conferr'd at *Christ's* coming, that, and that only, was made void by it, was needless after it. So the Observation of Days, censur'd in the Epistle to the *Galatians*, chap. iv. 4. is no other than that merely ritual one, which made a Part of the Law, so far as it was adapted to the Circumstances of the *Jews* when they

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received

received it, and was to be no longer in Force than till *his* Appearance, who was to put an End to the Distinctions of Jew and Gentile.

NOTHING in the Fourth Commandment can be repeal'd by the *Gospel*, that is agreeable to the Spirit and Temper of the *Gospel*; no Restrictions can be taken off by it, that are such upon our wrong Tendencies, upon any blameable Disposition in us: *It* may set us loose from mere Ceremonies; but we know nothing of it if we can apprehend it as freeing us from any Practice that is a Check upon our Vices, that is at all expedient for their Prevention, or Reformation: *It* licenses nothing, that can contribute to make us less serious and virtuous. The Condition neither of Man nor Beast can be the worse for it. The Christian is by no means permitted

permitted to be less favourable, than the Jew, either to his Servants, or his Cattle. Christ could not fulfil, or perfect the Law, if the Equity of every Precept thereof were not now as binding as ever. When, indeed, we reflect upon our Religion as aiming in all it teaches, and in all it enjoins, at nothing else, but to set right our Affections—to make our chief Good regarded by us as such—to heighten and extend our Benevolence, by representing the Love of others as the truest, the greatest of ourselves ; we cannot but consider it as enforcing all the Precepts in the *Mosaical* Law of a like Tendency—as obliging us more strictly to observe them.

THE Weekly Returns of a Day of Rest that contributes to form us to Thoughtfulness and Seriousness—to

improve us in Wisdom—to better our Dispositions, are most agreeable to the Christian's Rule—are countenanc'd by it throughout, and have it even expressly authorizing them. Thus, on the Day in which we are accusom'd to remit of our Diversions, to rest from our Labour, and to assemble for the Purposes of Religion; we find the Apostles, in like manner, assembled, and receiving from Christ the most extraordinary Marks of his approving that they were so. But from this Practice your Acquaintance would not dissuade you : The Diversions to which they invite are those, which consist with it—which are not to begin till the Duty of the Day is, in their Phrase, over, has been discharg'd.

I COULD never yet learn, what Ground there was from Scripture, for
 4 this

this Notion, of the Duty of the Day being over at such a certain Hour of it, or when such particular Forms had been complied with ; that it merely consisted in repeating so many Prayers for one half Hour, and hearing a few grave Things for the other. The Duty of the Day can be no other than the proper Employment of the Day ; an Employment of it suiting the End for which it is set apart : If we consult not this, we overlook what we should wholly regard. And, to speak the Truth, it is our overlooking the End of the Appointments of Religion, that has reduc'd it to a mere Profession and Name—that has occasion'd the Opposition it has met with, by depriving it of what alone can recommend it—of its Influence upon our Hearts and Manners.

IF our Creeds and Prayers, our Sacraments and Sermons, our Festivals and Fasts leave us just where we were, as to any Effect upon our Morals—if, instead of producing in us true Piety and Charity, they only serve to quiet us under the want of them, to make us easy without them; we may be very sure that a Religion thus expressing itself will have hard Words given it; the Sense or the Sincerity of its Advocates must be question'd; but then we may be equally sure, that to call this Religion, Christianity, is most unjust—that we might full as well give the Name of Christianity to the grossest Idolatry.

It is as far from being true, that he, who conforms to the Precepts of Christ, will have much of the Shew
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of Godliness, and very little of its Power, as it is from being true, that the Shew thereof is its Power, that we always are as we appear. *Christ's Law* lays a Stress upon no Rites, no Institutions, further than as they are subservient to good Morals—to substantial Virtue: Its Injunctions are not complied with, the Happiness it proposes cannot be obtain'd, but by our Endeavour to correct what is amiss, and perfect what is well in us. And as I press not any Observation of the Lord's-day, as agreeable to our Religion, but what will be serviceable in these respects; neither do I oppose any manner of remitting our Seriousness upon it, that is not prejudicial to our Morals, that is not a sure, or a probable, Hindrance to their due Regulation.

To

To shew whether there be not just Reason to censure Play on this Account, I will regard it in a moral Light; I will examine how far it consists with any good Effect upon our Lives, that can be thought producible by those Acts of Religion, which both you, and they, against whose Insinuations I would guard you, allow proper to be perform'd on the Lord's-day, but the Performance of which has all its Propriety from its Influence upon our Morals.

WITH how little Efficacy the public Worship may be regularly attended, and Truths of the greatest Importance each Week heard by us, we have had occasion to observe, in the Numbers who are irreproachable on these Heads, and yet to whose both Practice and Principles there are the

the weightiest Objections; such Numbers, as have occasion'd a too general Persuasion, That they, who frequent our Churches, are as unreform'd as they who never enter them. How this is to be accounted for is very evident. The Prayers made by us, the Doctrines taught us there, do not operate like a Charm; they do not produce their Effect in a manner we comprehend not, and without any Concurrence on our Part; but we treat them as if the Service expected from them *was* to be derived to us in some such Way—by Means we could not explain, nor at all account for. The Good they do us, who are rational Creatures, is by our Reason—by calling it out—by keeping it properly employ'd—by strengthening it—by encreasing its Power—by fitting *it* the better to

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direct and govern us, and disposing us to be directed and govern'd by it.

THUS, frequent Prayer occasioning frequent Returns of Seriousness and Recollection—frequently engaging us in the Consideration of the Perfections of the Deity—often reminding us of our entire Dependence upon him, of his absolute Power over us, of what infinite Importance it is to obtain his Favour, and of that Holiness and Virtue whereby alone it can be obtain'd, has certainly a natural Fitness to make us those truly pious and upright Persons, who have the best to hope from the Governor of the World—whom it suits both his Goodness and Justice to distinguish by his Favour.

So, when we are frequently attentive to the Lessons that shew us
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the Extent of our Duty—that give us just Notions of the several Parts of it—that furnish the proper Enforcements of it, representing the Connexion it has with our Well-being, the Evils we have to fear from neglecting, and the various Blessings we secure by conforming to it; we, undoubtedly, pursue the most probable Course to fix good Principles in our Minds—to acquire or confirm a right Disposition—to bring ourselves to the Love of Virtue, and have our every Action and Thought conformable to its Rules.

If Prayer be unaccompanied with Seriousness and Recollection—if it be used as a mere Form of Words, and its Impressions survive not its Performance—if we can persuade ourselves that when the Truths of Religion have been heard, or cursory

rily read by us, we have, for that Season, acquitted ourselves of our Task; we are then just as much benefited in a moral Way, as we should be in a natural, by the Food we never digested.

AND, that this is really the Case—that no one is the better merely for his devotional Exercises, you will readily allow, when you consider how you, or any other prudent Person, would proceed, if determin'd to conquer this or that wrong Habit: You, assuredly, would not think it sufficient to say a Prayer, or hear a Sermon, against it—you would set before yourself all the Inconveniences of it in the strongest Light—you would dwell upon them—you would endeavour so to fix them in your Mind, that you might, upon each Occasion, have them before you

you in their full Strength, and thereby be secur'd from whatever could endanger your Success. And if this be the Course, that every Person of Sense would take, to subdue the particular Habit that he was most offended at in himself, we have the clearest Evidence what must be done by us, when we attempt a still greater Reformation, and would correct whatever is wrong in us ; that we must in like manner, effect this by our Application to the Aids of Reason—by careful Attention and Reflection—by informing ourselves of the several Motives to it, and endeavouring to keep them so continually present to our Remembrance, that they may at all times act with their full Weight upon us.

SEE then what a particular Day,
set apart for *such Acts of Religion* as
8 may

may promote a right Practice in ourselves and in the Community, must necessarily require us to avoid throughout it; certainly, all Diversions and Amusements, that can be an Hindrance to the Mind receiving from *those Acts* any lasting Impressions of Duty — that dissipate our Thoughts, and necessarily efface the Seriousness then rais'd in us by our other Engagements. And let Play be consider'd, either as of that Sort which wants no Attention, or of that which demands a close one; let it be consider'd either as for a small Sum or a great; there are these Objections to it at the Season here referred to.

PLAY that wants no Attention, or in which Chance alone, as we say, makes the Winner, is one perpetual Alarm of our Hopes and
Fears

Fears — keeps our Spirits in a continual Agitation, now raising them by an unexpected Success, then depressing them by a Disappointment as little apprehended — it is wholly an Application to our Passions ; and if we sit not down to it upon a Principle, in the Censure of which all agree, it can please us upon no other Account but the frequent Turns it gives our Passions — the Change it is perpetually making in them ; for cloy'd we should soon be, were the Stakes quite trifling, if wholly on the winning Hand, and tired yet sooner, were we only to lose. Reason is here wholly unconcern'd — it enters not into our Diversion ; this Entertainment of our fortieth Year might have as well serv'd for our fourth.

THE

THE bare Childishness, therefore, of throwing Dice, or drawing Cards for what was of little Value — for what we could win or lose with Indifference, must induce us to think it by no means suiting the manner of unbending ourselves, which we ought to practise when our rational Powers have had their noblest Exercise, when they have been call'd out by Points of the utmost Importance. And if we thus hazard a considerable Sum, it would be a wrong Way of amusing ourselves at any time, because of the disorder'd State in which it must necessarily put our Minds, and the quite ruinous Consequences that might be apprehended from it ; but particularly blameable would it be on that Day which is set apart for our Improvement in Virtue ; and of course, therefore, for moderating those Passions which
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hereby are raised to an undue Height, and have their Power unavoidably increased.

BE it so, that you favour not the Kind of Gaming in which People of all Capacities are on a Level, or which has nothing to do with Capacity; you are for that in which Reason is applied to, and in which your Success almost wholly depends upon your attending closely, and reasoning justly. But when the Relief of our Spirits only is to be sought, don't we very improperly seek it from what makes that large Demand upon them, which there must be, when our Observation and Thought are thus employ'd? And when we are likewise trying not so much our Luck, as our Skill, no Sum, how inconsiderable soever, will be won or lost with perfect Indifference; by

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the most trifling Stake our Passions will then be call'd out, and our Solicitude made very unfuitable to that Frame of Mind which is requisite to give a due Effect to the serious Task that has previously engaged us.

WAS our Play attended with the Calmness and Equality of Temper, which is the only tolerable Plea we have for it, we should not have an Inclination towards it, that could not be satisfied with its engaging us Six Days in the Week. Objections there are to it at particular Seasons, which induce a very great Number of sober sensible Persons then to forbear it. And if, notwithstanding the Weight they allow these Objections, we cannot prevail upon ourselves to submit to a like Restraint; we give a strong Proof, that, how-
foever

soever low our Play may be, it is not a mere Amusement of ourselves: We are affected by it in a Manner in which we should not be, when a more particular Seriousness becomes us.

LET our Wits be set to work by larger Stakes, it is then evident, that we cannot consult our mere Recreation: We are engaged in an Affair of very great Importance, and we always treat it as such; we immediately feel its weighty Consequences, and therefore cannot but fully understand them. Consider us now fixing our Attention, exerting our utmost Sagacity, keeping our Memory on the stretch, and this, to gain from another what he would be extremely unwilling to part with; or, at best, to avoid losing ourselves what we had no sort of Reason to hazard: And

when we are consider'd as thus busied, I am sure it cannot be thought at all likely, that the sober Manner, in which we have pass'd a few Hours before this, will leave any Impressions upon our Minds, that may be of Use in our future Life.

THESE, Madam, seem to me such Objections to Gaming of every Kind, on that Day which is set apart for moral Improvements, as should dissuade us from it, were it liable to no further Censure: But it deserves a much severer on many Accounts.

WHEN we are so intent upon it, that it makes our every Day's Engagement, it must be from a bad Principle, from Covetousness, from the Gain we thirst after. Small Sums, we may be very confident, are never play'd for by them, whose
Passion

Passion for play is thus violent : And to be so eager after a Contest for large ones, has, undoubtedly, for its Cause, an immoderate Desire to win them.

WHEN there are *Amusements* by which our Health may be preserv'd or restor'd, our Understanding improv'd, our Mind compos'd, our Heart better'd, and only our more pleasing Passions call'd out; it, certainly, must be wrong to be daily postponing *them* to what has no one of these beneficial Effects attending it : We must be criminal in our constant Choice of that Diversion, which, if represented the most favourably, can be so only as a Diversion ; when others might have been chosen, which would have as much reliev'd us, and at the same time been of such real Advantage to us.

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THE Relief of our Spirits can scarcely be worse consulted than by high Play, as it gives our Fear such frequent Alarms ; as the unavoidable Disappointments in it will teaze and fret us, and therefore have a natural Tendency to sour our Tempers ; as, likewise, it seldom suffers us to discern when enough of our Time has pass'd in it, glad as we are to continue our Play, if on the winning Hand, that we may make the most of our Luck, and if Losers, that we may change it ; as we, further, by frequent Play contract an Indisposition to all the more rational Methods of entertaining ourselves, and, indeed, to that very Business, which cannot be neglected, without making ourselves and Families the severest Sufferers.

THE

THE Love of Play is the necessary Consequence of accustoming ourselves to it ; certainly, of being so accustom'd to it, that it is our every Day's Engagement. And what worse can well befall us, than a strong Attachment to it ? How many Persons of the best Families and Estates in the Kingdom have hereby been reduced to Beggary, or to a Dependance more dishonourable to them, than Beggary could have been ! In the Course of their Undoing, the spirituous Draught was the only Expedient to drown their Cares, and cheer their Spirits ; and, thus, what was the Ruin of their Fortune and Credit, became such, likewise, of their Health. The Losses of the Female Adventurer, not to be repair'd but by that of her Modesty, have cost her so inestimable an Ornament ;
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and with it depriv'd her of whatever could make her worthy of the Regard of others, or supportable to herself.

Nothing can well be less properly our Amusement, on a Day set apart for the Purposes of Religion, than what has so many mischievous Consequences attending it, as to occasion even the Interposition of the Law—to oblige the Legislature to forbid it on the severest Penalties. This is the Case of Gaming; the best modell'd Governments, have, from the most antient Times, concurr'd in punishing it, as the Bane of good Morals—as productive of Idleness, Knavery, Strife, and other Vices of the utmost Prejudice to the Prosperity and Peace of Society.

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WHAT I have, here, Madam, said about Laws against Gaming, naturally leads me to observe, that considering the *Sunday* Practice of it in a prudential Light alone, there is the strongest Reason for censuring it.

IN a Nation subsisting by Trade, too great Care cannot be taken to discourage whatever has a Tendency to make the People less industrious, frugal, sober, honest : And therefore it must be very indiscreet for the wealthier Part of such a Nation to shew themselves so attach'd to what is in all these Respects hurtful to their Inferiors, that they cannot forbear it even One Day in Seven—even on that Day, on which their Inferiors are most likely to be hurt by it.

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FROM

FROM the large standing Force now kept up by all our Neighbours, it may be thought, that, as we ourselves should not be, so we never shall be, for the future without one: And what a very dangerous one must this be to us, if the only Day, in which the common Men are to be spoke to in a serious Way, they are taught by their Officers to pass at Cards or Dice? For my own Part, I have of few Things a more terrible Idea, than of 18 or 20,000 Men with Swords in their Hands, and without both Principle and Property. *Principle*, I am sure, there can be none, where there is no *Consideration* — where no Time is allow'd for reading or hearing the Truths of Morality, and fixing them in the Mind by an attentive Review of, and serious Reflection upon them.

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THESE Inconveniencies too remotely affecting us, will, perhaps, be of little Weight : They are not alleg'd, as if there were none more immediate : Such, alas ! there are, and very grievous indeed. The Children educated under Parents, or a Parent, so addicted to Play, as to regard it alike suiting every Season, will be prepar'd to improve upon their Instructor, and be form'd to a Dissoluteness or Worthlessness, that shall vex none more than the Person from whose Example it proceeded : And to tell a Son or a Daughter, *Cards may be your Diversion every Day in the Week ; they are no Hindrance to your being properly affected by any right Things you have read or heard, before you sit down to them ; but you must not play too long, or too high, or too solicitously ;* would be as wise a

Part, as to encourage them in Liberties of another Nature, but with the Caution that they would not hurt their Health by them.

THERE is in the Young a Turn to Pleasure, that wants the most powerful Correctives; with all the Checks upon them, that you can devise, they will go Lengths of it, from which every one, who wishes them well, would be glad to restrain them: And therefore it must be the highest Imprudence, to let them loose to a Diversion from which the worst Consequences may be apprehended—to invite them to it at those Times, which, if properly pass'd, would be likeliest to prevent their being prejudic'd by it at any other. As, indeed, we are differently influenc'd—as neither the same Inclinations are to be found in all, nor, where they are found,

found, do they act with the same Strength ; the gaming Humour of the Parent may break through all Decorum, and yet the Child be without any such wrong Tendency. But this is quite an accidental Circumstance : The Manners of the Young are ordinarily, are naturally, form'd upon theirs with whom they most converse, and whom they are taught most to respect ; if they are unhurt by the bad Examples of such, it is an extraordinary Case ; it is the Praise of their own Dispositions, but it is no Alleviation of what has been done to increase their Faults, by him or her, whose greatest Care it should have been to correct them.

LET me shew such a Liking to Play, that the Seasons, which the Custom, the Laws, the Religion of my Country regard as the most solemn,

solemn, cannot restrain me from gratifying it ; I afford my Offspring the strongest Proof, that to give my gaming Humour its Scope, is the chief of my Pleasures ; and when they observe this, if they have not a contrary Turn from their Constitution, they are sure to be train'd to the same Satisfaction that I pursue ; and not having as much Money to spare for them, or not pursuing them with the same Skill, or not observing in them the same Caution ; what is my remoter Ruin, becomes their immediate ; becomes so, as they are educated to Carelessness, to an Indifference to every thing that is serious, that is likely to awe them, and controul their wrong Inclinations.

WHAT will be thus prejudicial to our Children, will be equally so to others, whose Morals it highly interests

terests us to consult, I mean our Servants. That we should look upon it as very material to us what their Morals are, no one can doubt, who considers what hurt they may do us in our Credit—in our Fortune; and, as some late Instances have publickly shewn, how much even our Lives are at their Mercy. It is an old Observation, that our Characters are generally grounded on the Representations of our Domesticks. A Set of very bad People about us, in whatever they differ, will join in the Endeavour to save *their* Reputation at the Expence of *ours*; and, to clear themselves will not care how much they vilify us. That a Family may be grievously distress'd by its inferior Members disregarding what Waste they make, or what unfair Advantages, needs no Proof, all will be ready enough to acknowlege this,

as such Numbers so notoriously experience it. And if we act with a Caution that will not suffer us to be involv'd in Difficulties by the most corrupt Domesticks, yet while such are about us, we cannot, with all our Wariness, but have much less to save, or distribute, or make an Appearance with, than we should have, were we better serv'd — were our Attendants influenc'd by Principle and Conscience.

As there is but one Day in the Week in which they who stand in the Relation to us I am mentioning; think they have any Concern with Seriousness; if *they* find this wholly disregarded by *us*, or a considerable Part of it so spent, that it can be of no Consequence to our Morals how the rest of it has been employ'd; *their* Disregard to it will be as great; the

the Example set them by such whom they are most disposed to respect, *they* will, assuredly, imitate; and the Diversions of the Parlour and Drawing-room be those of the Kitchen and Stables. The less cunning will be stript of their small Stock, and the Winners not enrich'd by it, but only have more to corrupt themselves with — to supply the Demands of their Lewdness or Intemperance.

NOTHING can be to any in the Class of Servants a greater Temptation to Dishonesty than Gaming. What they hazard is, generally, their present All; and, this lost, their Heads are of course turn'd to a speedy Recruit, by the only Arts that can procure it, by indirect and fraudulent ones: Or when they have, what we call, Luck on their Side,

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the Sum that comes to them with so much Ease, by being spent with as little Care as it was gain'd, draws them into a Way of Life in no wise suitable to their Income; and the Expensiveness of which requires as large a Supply from their Master's Purse, as any Loss can do that they sustain by playing less skilfully, or less fortunately.

IF there were Instances to be produced of no such Inconveniencies found in this or that Family, the Heads of which have gone every Length of Gaming here censur'd, they would not invalidate any thing here asserted. It would be a certain Truth, that Lewdness or hard Drinking is ruinous to the Constitution, though you could find the Lewd or the Drunken who have reach'd Sixty or Seventy Years: And as certain it is,

is, that let our Humour for Play confound all Seasons, and appear to us at none improperly gratify'd, it will be of most pernicious Consequence to the Morals of our Attendants, though *occasionally* it may *not* have been so, though you could name such whom it has not thus hurt.

I am sensible, that the Practice in all Popish Countries, and of the Papists in our own, will be objected as a sufficient Proof, that nothing like the Mischief here suggested can arise to ourselves or Families, though we should not confine our Play to Six Days in the Week. But this is a very strange Objection for any to make, who charge the Papists of all Nations with patronizing so many Practices destructive of all Morality — who so heavily condemn

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them for allowing the Pope to dispense with the most solemn Oaths; for their Notions of being virtuous by Proxy, of supplying the Want of Merit in Particulars, by the Redundancy of it in their Church; for the Encouragement their Absolutions give the living Sinner, and for the Ease their Masses secure to the Dead.

IF the Liberties taken by the Papists are to be imitated, why are not their Restraints? Why are their numerous Days of Abstinence and Mortification to be overlook'd? These may not unfitly be consider'd as correcting the dissolute Turn of Mind, too much promoted by their festival Amusements; and hindering, in some measure, the Mischief that would otherwise proceed from them.

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THERE is no Popish Country where Servants, and the meaner People in general, are left to themselves, as they are with us. We are quite easy about their Principles, provided they are not such as would induce them to rob us, or cut our Throats; and therefore, from what is done abroad in this or that respect, without any remarkable Hurt to their Morals, we should not judge of the Effects of a like Practice among ourselves, who take no sort of Care to obviate these Effects, to prevent their Mischief by Restraints in other Particulars. And this would, in Part, be an Answer to whatever could be urged on the same Side from the Practice of other Protestant Nations. Where it is thus blameable, the Evil doth not ensue that *we* have to fear from a like Failure,

Failure, because there is not in them that Remissness in other respects, which is so notorious among us.

WE are further to consider, what will result from a Difference of Temper, and of civil Regulations in different Countries; either of these widely varying the Effect that will be produced by the Pursuits of such as are of Figure and Fortune in them. With us, where Liberty and Property so fill the Heads of those in lowest Life; and where, from the Nature of our Government, Men of the best Estates in the Kingdom so often find it their Interest to make their Court to the meanest; there is no Diversion thought permitted only to this or that Person: There is no Diversion from which Any will think themselves shut out, who can but raise the Sum it requires,

quires. We have Laws with very severe Penalties annex'd, appropriating certain Sports; but to how little Purpose are they? How few do we find who look beyond their Inclinations, for their Qualification?

AND as the common People are no-where else found so inattentive to any Distinction of what suits a large, and what a streight Fortune; as the Laws of their Country are no-where else thus slighted by them, so may they, in the Case before us, no-where else receive Impressions of such bad Consequence to their Morals, as what it would here produce.

WITH regard to what is right or wrong, the Practice of this or that Nation, or Body of Men, can be no Rule for us. That there is
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an universally prevailing Corruption of Morals, is evident to all ; and the little Time that Men every-where allow themselves for Reflection, thro' their uninterrupted Pursuit of Gain or Pleasure, may be one, and even the chief Cause of it.

AND as to what is prudent or imprudent for us to do, we should not be determined by what happens in this or that Case among them, who are under quite different Regulations ; we should judge of it from what will probably, and does most frequently ensue — from what passes among them whose Situation is the same with ours. Consider, by this Rule, what may be apprehended, when they with whom we intrust our Affairs, observe so little Seriousness in us — observe our Passion for Play so violent, that no

Seasons are a Check upon it; and I am sure the bad Consequence of their having such Examples will fully appear.

THE Families in which you see these Liberties, are generally the most disorder'd you meet with; they, certainly, are the last out of which one of any Oeconomy would take a Servant.

BUT enough on this Subject: I had no Notion of proceeding to such a Length, when I first sat down to give you my Thoughts upon it. If you should be disposed to communicate them, all I have to ask is, let them be read with Seriousness: cavil not at this or that Phrase or Term: nor make Objections which affect not the main Argument. If I have Reason for me, let it not suffice that

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Fashion is against me: That is
nothing to do with the Opinion of
Numbers, nor Happiness with their
Pursuits. If what I have said is
right, allow it to be so; be convinc'd
by it; let no false Shame, no mean
Compliance, induce you to act con-
trary to it: you meet with disorder'd
and vainly, are the last out of which one
of any Oeconomy would take a

I am, &c. Servant

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